

Representations

David Holmes – Director/Trustee

Osel Enterprises Ltd

Dodnor Park

Newport

PO30

Licensing Department

Isle of Wight Council

Newport

PO30

23<sup>rd</sup> June 2013

Dear Sirs

I am writing as the applicant for a licence for our proposed 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary party – ‘Jack-up-the-80’s’ - to be held at the Garlic Festival field, Bathingbourne Lane, Newchurch PO36 0LU. I write in response to the three representations you have received in response to our application.

The Garlic Festival takes place each year on the field in one weekend in August. I am Chairman of that, as well as volunteer Director/Trustee for Osel Enterprises Ltd, beneficiary of the Jack event.

May I first say that some of the comments are disappointing and not relevant to the application – but I have offered explanations for clarification? Good relations with our neighbours are very important to us – that is why the party ends at 8.00pm.

We did indeed make an effort to contact those who may have felt they could be affected. We wrote many letters, hand-delivering or posting them to nearby businesses and residents. Several telephone calls have also taken place, to and from people concerned about what local rumour began calling ‘the festival.’ It was clear to us that our Wight Crystal party could easily be misconstrued as some kind of new festival, and we wanted to reassure our neighbours about our actual plans. As ever with these things – rumour and early pre-publicity caused some anxiety. Our radio station partner agreed to promote the event – but started before I was aware they were doing so. This week’s County Press Weekender section (CP 21/6) has the actual story.

Our planned celebration was (and still is) firstly just an opportunity for our clients and their families to have a good time. Osel and its clients have been through a period of great change in recent years – moving from direct local authority funding to personal budgets. We are proud of our successful

transition and that we are still providing employment opportunities for so many Island adults with learning disabilities. As Trustee's – we feel the Island does not know enough about us, mostly only our Wight Crystal water – we thought this event might help promote our work and success.

Our Charity celebrates 25 years' service this year – during Board Meetings, I was asked by my fellow Trustee's if some kind of celebration party could be possible? They knew that we might be able to use the facilities already in place for the Garlic festival. Each year, two or three weeks before the actual Garlic Festival weekend, a stage is erected, Marquee's go up, power and toilets arrive, along with various other facilities necessary to accommodate up to 20,000 visitors. Slightly reluctantly I agreed to this. I knew that we could hold the event with up to 500 people attending without applying for a 'new' licence. As ever with these things, it soon became apparent that to do what we actually wanted to do – provide music, have a drink and raise some money, we would need to accommodate more people and so applied for a licence for up to 2,000 people. It must be noted; this is only 10% of the number we can legally and safely accept at the Garlic Festival. Each year many people ask for permission to use the Garlic Festival site for various events. All requests are refused, on the basis that we understand our neighbours experience some inconvenience during our one weekend each year. We want to keep good relations with our neighbours.

In the seven years I have been Chairman of the Garlic Festival – I am unaware of any problems arising. I am proud that the Police, Fire, Ambulance and local authority believe our team operates safely and competently, setting a standard for well-run Island events. Our Marshall's and Security staff levels always far exceed the legally required number. Our event operates a strict Challenge 21 policy. To prevent theft and damage - we have on site security in advance of the event, overnight, during and in the period following. We would do exactly the same between the two events proposed.

Thompson's express concern about vandalism and drunken behaviour - but go on to say they have not suffered any. They also seem concerned about the Marquees being erected attracting campers. Only security staff will be on site - other than operating hours. They are not resident in Marquee's. The Marquee's are always erected up to two weeks preceding the Garlic show – this year would be no different. We do this fearing bad weather, particularly high winds, may prevent their erection. The same applies to the fun-fair, which has always been a part of the Garlic Festival and is enjoyed by young people. We inherited them, they arrive once – and leave once. Nothing would be different. The same local business traders that we inherited are almost exactly those who came when we took over the event seven years ago – the fun-fair is also the same family. Local businesses who attend say the Garlic Festival is a vital part of their annual business. It is enjoyed by visitors from far and wide as well as local people.

I have to say I was taken aback at the allegation that local charities no longer benefit from the Garlic Festival. Dozens of Island charities benefit from the Garlic Festival. Many attend raising funds. The Earl Mountbatten Hospice will be attending the 'Jack-up-the80's' event too. Mrs Thompson, from the garden centre, has personally raised thousands of pounds for the hospice in recent years - because she generously allows us to park cars on her land during the Garlic Festival weekend.

Thompson's letter refers to traffic chaos during the Garlic Festival weekend. But to my certain knowledge – the traffic plan we now operate means the queues of years ago are no longer a feature of the Garlic Festival weekend. The plan agreed with Highways, operated by DTM works brilliantly

well. Queues are virtually non-existent; no-one is delayed for more than a few minutes. The Jack-up-the-80's event starts and finishes later – 12.00 noon to 20.00hrs. I stress again, it will only have 10% of the number of visitors the Garlic Festival attracts.

We do not propose operating the Garlic Festival one-way system outside Thompson's for the Jack event – it is just not necessary, when so few people are attending. The only public car parking will be on the main Newport - Sandown road. I do not believe Thompson's would be affected in any way.

One of the other representations refers to disruption to their holiday business. I cannot see how this is possible? Even the Garlic Festival does not 'back-up traffic to Arreton village' as claimed. It has not done so for many years. This claim is in any case not relevant to the Jack event - with so many fewer people attending compared to the Garlic Festival? The Garlic Festival does create some hold-ups in Bathingbourne Lane, but only on the actual show weekend – up to an hour or so before the show opens and for half an hour or so when it ends at 6.00pm, as almost everyone leaves at the same time. This minor delay is fairly easily avoided by local residents. I cannot believe the Jack event will involve any disruption in the lane – so few vehicles will arrive and leave from that access, essentially artists and staff cars only.

The paragraph above responds equally to the other representation. It is from someone claiming to live 'opposite' the field. However – no residences actually adjoin the Garlic Festival site? The nearest house is further along Bathingbourne Lane? The only house actually adjoining the site is on the main road and is for sale - [REDACTED]

I am happy to answer any further questions arising from my statement above.

Yours faithfully

David Holmes

Director/Trustee Osel Enterprises Ltd